

UNOFFICIAL

CUMBERLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 14, 2008

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Cumberland School Committee held on Thursday, February 14, 2008, at the Cumberland High School Auditorium, 2600 Mendon Road, Cumberland, RI, at 7:46 p.m., was called to order by Chairman Frederic C. Crowley, with the following present:

Frederick C. Crowley, Chair, Donald J. Costa, Vice Chair, Karen MacBeth, Clerk, Lisa Beaulieu, Robert C. Thibodeau, Wayne D. Wager, Earl T. Wood

Also Present: Donna A. Morelle, Ed.D., Superintendent; Susan C. Carney, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent; Joseph A. Rotella, Esq., Director of Administration

I. Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Thibodeau requested a moment of silence in memory of Mr. Crowley’s father who was a teacher at the high school and passed away 35 years ago. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ms. MacBeth.

II. Approval of Agenda – On a motion by Ms. Beaulieu, and a second

by Mr. Wood, it was VOTED 6-0 TO APPROVE waiving the five minute rule under Public Comments, with Mr. Crowley abstaining.

On a motion by Mr. Wood, and a second by Mr. Wagner, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE sealing the Executive Session minutes of February 14, 2008 (6:30 p.m.).

Ms. Beaulieu made a motion to move item XVIII. Executive Session to after III. Student Recognition.

Mr. Thibodeau provided a second. On a roll call vote, it was VOTED 5-2 TO APPROVE, with the following voting AYE: Mr. Thibodeau, Mr. Wagner, Mr. Costa, Ms. Beaulieu, Mr. Crowley; NAY: Ms. MacBeth, Mr. Wood.

On a motion by Ms. Beaulieu, and a second by Mr. Wagner, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE allowing the seven middle school students to speak as part of student recognition.

Mr. Wagner made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Mr. Costa provided a second. Ms. MacBeth questioned getting items on the agenda as she has requested having items put on the agenda and they are not there. The Chair said to call him and explained he spoke to her after the deadline to get the agenda posted. Mr. Costa noted he e-mailed items to him and faxed them to Dr. Morelle and they are not there. The Chair stated he thought those items had been satisfied. Ms. Mac Beth felt there should be a process in place to contact the

Chair and stated she would like to be part of writing the agenda. On a roll call vote, it was VOTED 6-1 TO APPROVE with the following voting AYE: Mr. Thibodeau, Mr. Wagner, Mr. Costa, Ms. Beaulieu, Mr. Wood, Mr. Crowley; NAY: Ms. MacBeth.

III. Student Recognition – The Superintendent reported on the Town Spelling Bee at McCourt Middle School and explained the item for Recess on the agenda was for parents to take photos in the lobby. Dr. Morelle read the names of the winners and presented students who were present with a certificate. Mr. Pires introduced the officers of Student Government at McCourt Middle School, stating the students have learned a great deal about leadership. Seven students spoke against schedule changes and moving language, chorus and other courses.

IV. Vote to go into Executive Session for Discussion and/or Action Items Referred to in GLORI 42-46-5 and V. Recess

A. Personnel Matters – Exception (1)

1) CTA/ICSE

Cumberland School Committee

February 14, 2008/Minutes -2-

B. Negotiations/Litigation – Exception (2)

1) CTA/ICSE

2) Central Administrator's Contracts

3) Non-Contractual Salaries

4) Potential Litigation

Ms. Beaulieu made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session. A second was provided by Mr. Thibodeau. It was VOTED 6-1 TO APPROVE, with Mr. Wood voting against. Open Session recessed at 8:22 p.m.

Open Session reconvened at 9:05 p.m. The Chair reported Dr. Morelle has a one year contract extension which expires on June 30, 2009. He stated the vote was 4-3 and asked the members to state how each voted.

Mr. Wood requested a point of order. On a motion by Mr. Wood, and a second by Mr. Wagner, it was VOTED 6-1 TO APPROVE sealing the Executive Session minutes, with Ms. MacBeth voting against.

V. New Business

F. Report from the Space Utilization Task Force – Mr. Gibbons reported they are presenting their final

Recommendations: 1) move Pre-K to the BF Norton as long as all building and education regulations can be met; 2) adjustments be made to the Cumberland Hill and Community Schools boundaries to allow Cumberland Hill to remain a four track school, including moving two kindergarten sessions back to Cumberland Hill or keep all

kindergarten sessions at Community; 3) Plan A and Plan B for middle schools, with charts on the maps; 4) grandfather current students at grade 4 moving to grade 5 and current grades 6, 7 at their current school; 5) each household that could be changed be notified prior to the public hearings; 6) space needed to have Cumberland Hill a true four track school must have 22 classrooms; Ashton should have 17 classrooms to be a true three track school; 7) schedule two public hearings prior to adopting any changes and they request that no hearings be held during school vacations. The Chair recognized two members of the committee who were present. He requested Dr. Morelle schedule the hearings. The Superintendent thanked Mr. Gibbons and the committee.

VI. Chairperson's Report – The Chair reported a teacher at Blackstone School, Ruth Gomberg, passed away. He reported receiving a letter from Steve Mooney and gave it to Dr. Morelle to respond. He also received a letter from Christine Spats requesting an agenda item on the Superintendent's contract and it asked that Mr. Vela be placed on the agenda. The Chair asked Mr. Rotella to hold the letter. The Chair noted the five minute rule under Public Comments has been waived and there is a rule of decorum not to speak on grievances or any items taken up in Executive Session. He asked people to remember it is comment, not Q&A, and asked there be no personal attacks and people to be civil.

The Chair noted Mr. Vela asked to speak because he paid for it and he

noted a conflict of interest because the Chair represents an organization Mr. Vela is in charge of and turned the Chair over to the Vice Chair for Public Comments.

VII. Comments from the Public – Joseph Vela stated he had questions to ask. Mr. Costa asked Mr. Vela to proceed. Ms. MacBeth made a motion that Mr. Vela be put on the agenda after the Comments from the Public. Mr. Wood said to stop prolonging this and put him on the agenda now. Mr. Rotella explained the Open Meetings law states the committee can add an item of informational purposes, but noted they would be violating the 48 hour notice. Mr. Wood noted it is not the administration's agenda, it is the school committee's agenda. Mr. Costa ruled Mr. Vela out of order when he attempted to make comments that attacked the Superintendent. Mr. Vela commented on the high school test scores. Mr. Wagner asked Mr. Vela to comment to the school committee, but felt his attitude to Dr. Morelle was out of order and asked people to show decorum. Mr. Vela noted there was an executive decision with which he disagreed, stating the committee did not listen to the public. The Superintendent attempted to answer Mr. Vela's comments but was interrupted. She noted there was an item on the agenda on assessments. Mr. Vela stated he requested minutes be unsealed and forwarded to him with a copy of the Superintendent's performance review. Mr. Costa reported someone from the Attorney General's office will be at a meeting in March. Mr. Rotella reported the Attorney General found the committee has followed the law and the only finding was failure to disclose a vote at

a meeting in February. He stated contracts, performance evaluations are not public documents.

Cumberland School Committee

February 14, 2008/Minutes -3-

The Superintendent explained her comment regarding on-line petitions was in response to a reporter's question on what she thought of on-line petitions, and she stated it was like an anonymous letter and it was not in response to a specific petition. In response to being on the committee, Ms. Beaulieu explained that she did have a student in kindergarten and that she did home school a student. Mr. Wagner explained being on the committee was his attempt to give back to the community and they try to make the best decisions they can. Lisa Regan commented on the performance of the public schools and she was concerned about her property values. The Superintendent commented she is listening to everyone's comments. Vanessa Molloy spoke on her passion for teaching languages and the younger you are learning a second language the easier it is. Sharon Coyle started to speak about safety at the high school and was ruled out of order by Mr. Rotella as it is a police matter. Gail Girolimon read a letter to Dr. Morelle regarding the 8th Grade Orientation to be held on Sunday and hoped a clarification would be made to students and parents. Kathie Richard asked about the ICSE agenda item, that the

date should be 2007-2010, not 2006-2009. Alessandra Amin stated she and Douglas are in AP 5 French were planning to major in French in college and expressed concern for the reorganization of languages. Douglas Booth spoke against the language reorganization. Kate Egan commented about the budget hearing, and the lack of kindergarten aides and parents volunteering in the classrooms. She stated she was impressed with the Space Utilization Task Force. Brad Lamoureux stated he is a senior at the high school and agreed with the other kids and stated the French reorganization is ridiculous. Sarah Brady explained she is a world language teacher and stated there is no debate, the earlier students start studying the more fluent they become. Mr. Wood commented he has not seen a language arts proposal. The Superintendent stated that at a budget hearing she referenced a middle school proposal as a result of the SALT visit, but has yet to make a proposal. Deborah Jones commented on the success and importance of the high school program. Jackie Crowley noted Cumberland has the lowest per pupil expenditure and encouraged the public to attend the budget meetings and contact legislators. She also stated that four committee members took out papers but had no one running against them due to the apathy in town. She also commented on the level of disrespect by the adults at the meeting.

VIII. Student Government Report – The Superintendent stated she would have them available for the next meeting.

IX. Reports of Standing Committees

A. Payment of Bills – On a motion by Mr. Costa, and a second by Mr. Wagner, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE payment of bills in the amount of \$758,965.48.

B. FY 08 Budget Amendment – On a motion by Mr. Wood and Mr. Costa, and a second by Ms. Beaulieu, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE a motion to restore three .5 kindergarten assistants at \$9,432 each. Ms. MacBeth asked the Superintendent to report about their plans for kindergarten assistants. Dr. Morelle stated there was a strategy for on-going support for the balance of this school year and had the cooperation from ICSE to keep until this could be worked out.

She thanked Mrs. Richard for their support. The Superintendent noted there is a misconception and there has always been a shared responsibility among the classrooms even when there were full time assistants.

C. Special Programs – Mr. Thibodeau reported in response to his last report on a program to save four million dollars, someone from town has stepped up and said he could do better. A report will be made in the future.

D. Property Committee – Mr. Wood reported meeting on some of the projects, including the fire panels and dish washers. The major project to be done is the roof at BF Norton and they have to wait for the roof to be dry for someone to go up on the roof. The Chair asked about carbon monoxide detectors and Mr. Wood said he had not spoken to Mr. Hilton.

E. Curriculum Committee – Ms. Beaulieu reported there will be a

meeting on Keyworks next week, as well as discussions with Dr. Carney.

X. Consent Agenda – On a motion by Mr. Wood, and a second by Ms. Beaulieu, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the consent agenda.

A. Police Report

B. Truancy Report

C. Approval of Minutes

1. Open Session: 1/10/08; 1/24/08

D. Facilities Report

E. Enrollment Report

Cumberland School Committee

February 14, 2008/Minutes -4-

XI. Approval of Minutes

A. Special Meeting: 10/19/06

Vote to Approve Special Meeting Minutes of 10/19/06 – On a motion by Ms. Beaulieu, and a second by Mr. Wood, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the minutes.

B. Executive Session: 10/12/06

Vote to Approve Executive Session Minutes of 10/12/06 – On a motion by Ms. Beaulieu, and a second by Mr. Wagner, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the minutes.

C. Special Meeting/Executive Session: 10/19/06

Vote to Approve Executive Session Minutes of 10/19/06 – On a motion by Mr. Wagner, and a second by Ms. Beaulieu, it was VOTED 6-0 TO APPROVE the minutes, with Mr. Costa abstaining.

D. Executive Session: 10/26/06

Vote to Approve Executive Session Minutes of 10/26/06 – On a motion by Mr. Wagner, and a second by Ms. Beaulieu, it was VOTED 6-0 TO APPROVE the minutes, with Ms. MacBeth recused.

E. Special Meeting/Executive Session: 11/29/07

Vote to Approve Executive Session Minutes of 11/29/06 – On a motion by Mr. Wagner, and a second by Ms. Beaulieu, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the minutes.

F. Executive Session: 1/10/08

Vote to Approve Executive Session Minutes of 1/10/08 – On a motion by Ms, Beaulieu, and a second by Mr. Wood, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the minutes.

G. Executive Session: 1/24/08

Vote to Approve Executive Session Minutes of 1/24/08 – On a motion by Ms. Beaulieu, and a second by Mr. Wood, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the minutes.

H. Report out Votes of Executive Session: 4/27/06 – On a motion by Mr. Wagner, and a second by Ms. Beaulieu, it was VOTED 6-1 TO APPROVE, with Mr. Wood voting against. The Chair reported the committee heard a personnel matter that was just settled on 1/15/08 and it had been voted 6-1 on a roll call vote to terminate an employee.

I. Report Out Votes of Executive Session: 12/14/06 – On a motion by

Mr. Wagner, and a second by Mr. Costa, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE. The Chair reported it had been unanimously voted to approve the Articles 14 and 15 of the CTA contract and it was unanimously voted to approve the memorandum of agreement to print the CTA contract. Also there was a letter received from an attorney for the terminated employee and it was voted 4-3 to approve allowing the attorney to present a litigation plan to the committee.

XII. Personnel Recommendations

A. On a motion by Mr. Costa, and a second by Mr. Wood, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the retirement of Casimiro Silverio, Social Studies Department Chair/Teacher at Cumberland High School, effective at the end of the 2007/2008 school year.

B. On a motion by Ms. Beaulieu, and a second by Mr. Wagner, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the resignation of Leigh Anne Butterworth, Physical Education/Adaptive Physical Education Teacher at North Cumberland Middle School, effective 2/1/2008.

C. On a motion by Mr. Wagner, and a second by Ms. Beaulieu, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the resignation of David Fanning, Baseball Coach at Joseph L. McCourt Middle School, effective 1/22/2008.

D. On a motion by Ms. Beaulieu, and a second by Mr. Wagner, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the resignation of Thomas O'Connor, Boys Golf Coach, System-wide, effective 1/28/2008.

E. On a motion by Ms. Beaulieu, and a second by Mr. Wood and Mr. Wagner, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the FMLA

Maternity Leave of Marissa Rodenhiser, Grade 6 Teacher at North Cumberland Middle School, effective 1/28/2008 with a return date of 5/12/2008.

F. On a motion by Mr. Wood, and a second by Mr. Wagner, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the FMLA Medical Leave of Robert Brides, Custodian, at Garvin Memorial School, effective 2/4/2008 with a return date of 5/19/2008.

XIII. Old Business

A. Building Committee Update – Mr. Wood reported under the 3.5 Building Committee the admin and nurses area at Ashton will be occupied after the break. At Cumberland Hill they are still under winter conditions; masonry work won't be done until spring. The 2010 project is continuing. He noted there are about 750 lockers that have been refurbished.

Cumberland School Committee

February 14, 2008/Minutes -5-

The Superintendent reported they are planning a rededication and Dr. Gould is co-chairing the committee with Mr. Lynch. They are targeting a date in September.

B. Vote to Approve Pilot Credit Recovery Program at Joseph L. McCourt Middle School – On a motion by Mr. Costa, and a second by Mr. Wagner, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the

program. Ms. Beaulieu stated she hoped they would report back on the program. Mr. Wagner wished them the best of luck.

XIV. New Business, Continued

A. Home School Instruction Request/2007-2008 School Year – Dr. Carney reported the student has been in a private school. On a motion by Mr. Wood, Ms. Beaulieu and Mr. Costa, and a second provided by Mr. Wagner, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE the request.

B. Report on District Assessments – The Assistant Superintendent noted the time being ten to Midnight and some of the information she was to present would have called into question the accuracy of some comments made earlier. The Superintendent commented that she was hoping to address this before the 28th. She didn't think it was fair to let some of the statements made tonight linger and not fair that some of those people who made those statement weren't there to the end of the meeting,. She felt it is unfair to come, make a commotion and then depart the meeting. On a motion by Mr. Wagner, and a second by Ms. Beaulieu, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE tabling to February 28th.

C. Vote on Non-Renewals – The Superintendent explained the March 1st state requirement. On a motion by Mr. Wagner with regret, and a second by Ms. Beaulieu with regret, it was VOTED 6-1 TO APPROVE the non-renewals, with Ms. MacBeth voting against.

D. Discussion and Votes on the 2008-2009 School Budget – The Superintendent explained she was hoping to clarify a retirement

proposal. Mr. Thibodeau commented on the importance and the small window for a possible \$500,000 savings. On a motion by Mr. Thibodeau, and a second by Mr. Wagner, it was VOTED 6-1 TO APPROVE allowing the Superintendent to solicit letters of resignation from certified and non-certified staff to realize those savings in the budget, with Ms. MacBeth voting against. Mr. Rotella stated they are offering a one time incentive to any employee in the system and could have a memorandum of agreement, but it is not changing the contract. The Superintendent clarified the budget proposal is based on 25 teachers taking the incentive. Ms. MacBeth noted her concern that they may not be able to hire at third step and thought they should wait for the Governor's plan. Ms. MacBeth commented on the difficulty of making budget decisions over a couple weeks time period.

E. Ratification of 2007-2010 ICSE Contract – Mr. Rotella reported he went through the documents with the ICSE service representative and he went through the salary scale with Mr. Prignano and Mr. Legacy. This is the final document. Ms. MacBeth asked about removing language regarding teacher assistants transporting students and Mr. Rotella stated there is nothing that requires them to transport. The Chair noted the contract is complete and ready to be voted upon. On a motion by Mr. Wagner, and a second by Ms. Beaulieu, it was VOTED 5-1-1 TO APPROVE, with Ms. MacBeth voting against and Mr. Costa abstaining.

XV. Superintendent's Report – The Superintendent thanked everyone

for staying. She noted she will be speaking with the committee. Dr. Morelle held up a copy of the new District Newsletter. It is in response to comments about communication in the district.

XVI. Comments from the Public – Kathie Richards commented there is one position, a job coach, that does require them to use their own car.

XVII. School Committee Comments (School Liaison Reports) – Mr. Wood noted committee members received an invitation to a Cumberland Hill PTO auction on March 8th at Bella's. Ms. Beaulieu thanked those remaining in the audience. She commented on the scores and feels they are in a recovery status. She referred to a comment in the paper by the Mayor that 2.2% is too high.

Cumberland School Committee

February 14, 2008/Minutes -6-

XVIII. Adjournment – On a motion by Mr. Wagner, and a second by Mr. Thibodeau, it was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE adjourning at 12:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Harris

Recording Secretary

Subject to approval by the School Committee